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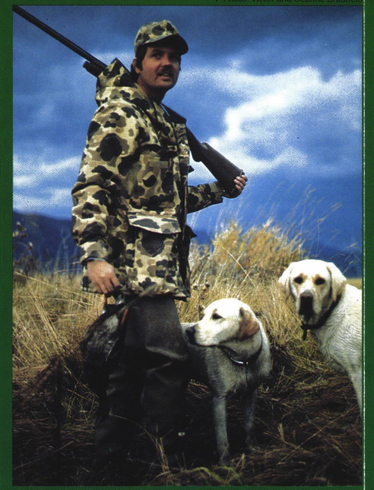
World-Class Resource • Habitats • Species • Boundless Opportunities • Viewing • Fishing • Hunting • Active Management • Partnerships • Research • Technologies

▼ Photo: Thomas D. Lansky

▼ Photo: Glenn Smith

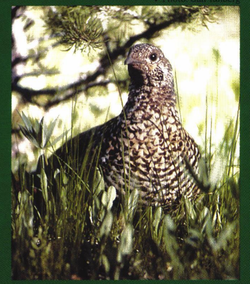


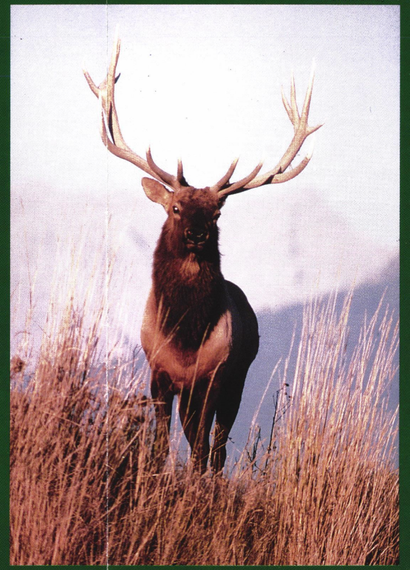
▼ Photo: Victor and Deanne Bradley

▼ Photo: Myron Cherry

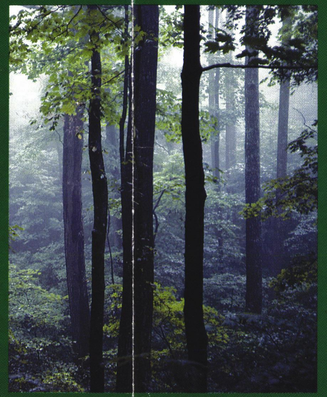
▼ Photo: Jack Griffith

▼ Photo: Jack Ballard





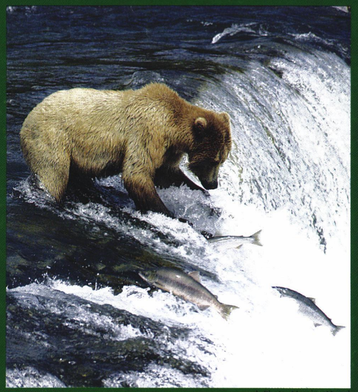
▼ Photo: Thomas Mangelsen



Forests: On the Wild Side

Wildlife, Fish, Endangered Species

Habitat Management in the National Forest System



▲ Photo: Mark Newman

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service

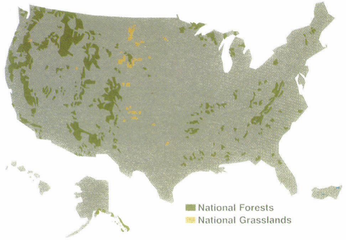
A World-Class Resource . . . of Habitats and Species

Southern hardwoods, home of the stealthy white-tailed deer and the wild turkey; wetlands, host to millions of ducks, geese, and shorebirds annually; mountain meadows, stomping grounds for the majestic elk and grizzly bear; streams and lakes for salmon, trout, and bass; coastal rain forests, last refuge for the threatened northern spotted owl. These are just a few of the species and habitats found on the 191 million acres making up the National Forest System. This land area, managed by the Forest Service, is roughly the size of Texas and Louisiana rolled into one. These rich and diverse National Forests and Grasslands and their wild inhabitants belong to all Americans!

The National Forests and Grasslands are home for thousands of species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, insects, and plants. In the West, half of the Nation's spawning and rearing grounds for salmon and steelhead trout, and 3 out of every 4 acres of elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat habitat are here. The National Forests and Grasslands support the richest variety of habitats of any land management system in North America and the rich variety of plants and animals dependent on them.

Threatened or endangered species, like the gray wolf and grizzly bear, depend on the National Forests for survival. This means careful management of their food, water, space, and shelter. Through such management, the grizzly is making a dramatic comeback on the National Forests.

The National Forest System



▼ Photo: John Rinne

▼ Photo: William Munoz

▲ Photo: Hal Salwasser

▲ Photo: Gail Tunberg

Boundless Opportunities

Viewing

There's no better place to claim your share of America's wild heritage. People make 32 million visits yearly to enjoy wildlife, fish, and rare plants through photography, viewing, and nature study—the fastest growing way to enjoy wildlife. The National Forests and Grasslands are one of this continent's foremost workshops of nature's sights and sounds and natural processes.

Fishing

Fishing is one of America's most popular outdoor activities—more than 35 million angler days yearly—and growing. Whether it's trolling for salmon in Alaska or casting for bass in Florida, fishing is great on the National Forests and Grasslands!

Hunting

For many, the public lands are the only places available for hunting. Hunters make 28 million visits annually to trek over frosty meadows in pursuit of elk, moose, deer, and wild turkeys or to watch the dawn from duck blinds on the 12 million acres of huntable waterfowl habitat. Others trap to carry on an old tradition and to enjoy the out-of-doors.

▲ Photo: Paul Conklin

Needs Active Management and Protection Through . . .

Partnerships

Over 800 Forest Service biologists and botanists manage wildlife, fish, and rare plant habitats. They work closely with State and other Federal managers and agency team members—foresters, engineers, range conservationists, soil scientists, geologists, and others—to plan how the National Forests and Grasslands will be managed and used. Through nationwide partnerships, many sport, conservation, and public interest groups and individuals contribute ideas and work alongside Forest Service personnel to manage habitats. Forest plans guide these joint efforts through the programs, "Get Wild" for wildlife, "Rise to the Future" for fish, and "Every Species Counts" for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. In recent years, partners have doubled the value of each Federal dollar with labor, materials, or monetary contributions to benefit wildlife, fish, and rare plants.

Research

Forest Service research projects have produced a substantial body of scientific information on habitat management—including pioneering studies on big game, fish, woodpeckers, owls, songbirds, and threatened, endangered, or sensitive plant and animal species. The Forest Service carries out numerous studies every year in cooperation with State and university experts. Scientists at Forest and Range Experiment Stations research species' habitat needs and measure the effects of the other things we do, from firefighting to roadbuilding.

Blending Other Interests with Fish and Wildlife Habitat Needs

Balancing the yearly needs of 3,000 species with the grazing of millions of head of livestock and the harvest of billions of board feet of timber—not to mention oil drilling and off-highway vehicles—is seldom easy and often controversial. This challenging task requires the continual development and refinement of management plans by biologists, botanists, and other resource professionals. They actively strive to meet the goal of the Forest Service: "Caring for the Land and Serving People."

▼ Photo: Yuen-Gi Yee

Improving Habitats and Restoring Populations

Through habitat improvement projects, many species have returned to habitats once abandoned. Wetlands are improved by building dams and nesting islands, game ranges by seeding, fertilizing, or burning. Special plant habitats and unique ecosystems are identified and protected. Fisheries benefit from developed spawning gravels, constructed fish ladders, and restored streambanks.

Developing Technologies and Expertise

Forest Service habitat ecologists coordinate the Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Relationships system, a network of data-gathering, habitat-planning, and evaluation methods and models. This system uses the most current scientific information and state-of-the-art methods, such as population viability analysis, geographic information systems, and risk analysis. Resource managers use these tools to improve decisions affecting wildlife, fish, and rare plants.

See for Yourself

This part of America's Great Outdoors belongs to you. These rich, diverse lands are open for all to experience: Nearly 94,000 miles of roads suitable for passenger cars and over 108,000 miles of trails can take visitors just about anywhere. Vast Wilderness areas are part of the National Forests and Grasslands—waiting to be explored. No matter where you live, you probably are no more than a day's drive away.

Come. Fish a trout stream. Hunt wild turkey. Photograph a winter gathering of eagles. Discover a rosebud orchid or a pink ladyslipper. Become a partner in habitat improvement. Talk to Forest Service managers and scientists about their work. Or simply refresh your spirit in the wild heritage of the National Forests and Grasslands.

To find out how to visit or help, call or write the Forest Service office nearest you. Listed here are the addresses and telephone numbers of the Forest Service Washington, DC, and regional offices.

Washington Office
14th Street and
Independence Avenue SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090
202-447-3957

Northern Region
Federal Building
200 East Broadway Street
P.O. Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807
406-329-3511

Rocky Mountain Region
11177 West Eighth Avenue
P.O. Box 25127
Lakewood, CO 80225
303-236-9431

Southwestern Region
Federal Building
517 Gold Avenue SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-842-3292

Intermountain Region
Federal Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
801-625-5352

Pacific Southwest Region
630 Sansome Street
San Francisco, CA 94111
415-705-2874

Pacific Northwest Region
319 SW Pine Street
P.O.Box 3623
Portland, OR 97208
503-326-2971

Southern Region
1720 Peachtree Road NW
Room 850
Atlanta, GA 30367
404-347-2384

Eastern Region
310 West Wisconsin Avenue
Room 500
Milwaukee, WI 53203
414-297-3693

Alaska Region
Federal Office Building
709 West Ninth Street
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802
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Forest Service
Wildlife and Fisheries Staff
Washington, DC

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